SSA	Total Villages	Villages with VPTs	Uncovered Villages
Sangli	708	708	0
Satara	1573	1415	158
Sindhudurg	772	536	236
Solapur	1163	1138	25
Wardha	1015	860	155
Yeotmal	1751	1039	712
TOTAL	42038	31005	11033

Provision of public telephones in the villages

1246. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government propose to connect all the villages in the country by public telephone; and

(b) how many of these are proposed to be provided during this year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Out of 607, 491 villages, 358, 538 villages have been provided with public telephone facilities till 1st March, 2000. Subject to the availability of resources and achievement of the target fixed for Private Basic Service Providers all the remaining 248,953 villages will be covered gradully by the end of 9th Plan. Department plans to provide 45,000 village public telephones during the year 1999-2000.

Action against postal employees involved in crimes

1247. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a special Court in Jabalpur has awarded a senior postal officer vigorous imprisonment and fine for cheating postal department;

(b) if so, the details of the case; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take against officers and employees who are involved in various crimes viz. late and non-delivery of Money Orders and for cheating of exchequer for lost Vikaspatras/Bonds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, five subordinate postal officials have been awarded Regorous Imprisonment and fine by the Special Judge (CBI), Jabalpur during the period 1998-99, due to their conviction in

cases of misappropriation of amounts and fraudulent activities relating to Savings Bank and Savings Certificates.

(c) (i) Detailed investigation is conducted at the level of Directorate, Circle or Divisions by an officer of appropriate rank depending on the amount involved when officers and employees are found involved in criminal cases including late or non delivery of money orders or for cheating of exchequer for lost Vikas Patras/Bonds. Cases involving frauds and financial losses beyond Rs. 5000/- are reported to police also and efforts are made to get the offenders convicted in the court of law.

(ii) Disciplinary proceedings are initiated against all officials found involved in crime/negligence as per their lapses identified in the Inquiry report and deterrent penalties are imposed. Efforts are made to recover the Government loss from departmental officials who are identified as principal/subsidiary offenders, through disciplinary proceedings as well as proceedings under Public Accounts Default Act initiated through Revenue Authority.

Extension of cut-off date of migration package

1248. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the report "four telecom firms may be disqualified" published in the "The Statesman" dated 1st February, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the DOT have asked for further extension of the cut-off date of the implementation of the migration package from 31st January to 15th March, 2000;

(c) if so, the reasons therefore;

(d) whether all the companies which are in line for migration to the revenue sharing arrangement have withdrawn all the cases and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government, in consideration of totality of the circumstances, offered to the existing licensees of Basic and Cellular Services on 22.7.1999, a package for migration to revenue sharing regime under the New telecom Policy 1999. As per the Package, 35% of the dues were to be paid by 15.8.99 Bank Guarantees to securitise balance dues were to be furnished by 30.11.99